

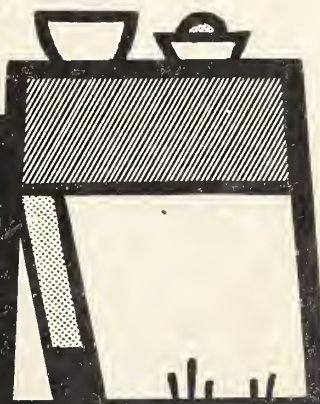
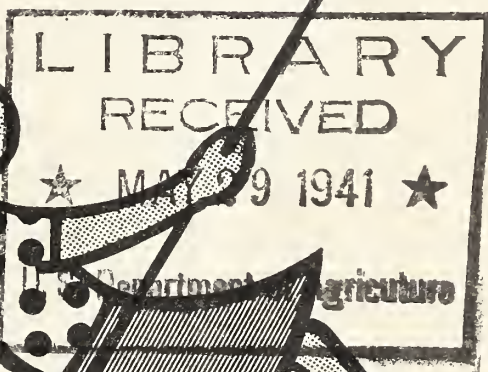
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# SUMMER LUNCHES for Hungry Children



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
SURPLUS MARKETING ADMINISTRATION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. SMA — SL 8

# SUMMER LUNCHES For HUNGRY CHILDREN

FOOD is not a school-year luxury. Our undernourished children need it summer and winter. Nine million of them suffer from lack of proper food at home.

School lunch programs in each of our 48 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands were providing early in 1941 a healthy, noonday meal to 4 million underfed children. But these programs were set up on the basis of the school year. To thousands of hungry children, summer vacation has meant the end of the one good meal they could count on each day at school. The child's *need* for protective health-building foods, however, doesn't stop when summer comes.

Every community, with the help of available surplus foods, can provide summer lunches for its underfed children. These are children from families whose incomes are too low to afford the nutritious foods growing children need. It is no fault of the children that they are undernourished. It is of vital concern to the Nation, however, to see that the children of today—the citizens and leaders of tomorrow—receive the health protection they deserve.

The Surplus Marketing Administration has been set up by Congress within the Department of Agriculture to aid farmers in removing their surplus crops. Many of these crops are surplus only because farmers do not have a market for them. They are not surplus in the sense that there is an oversupply for the needs of the country. Foods high in nutritive value, such as butter, eggs, and vegetables, are included among them. The Surplus Marketing Administration has been buying up surplus foods to provide a market for the farmers and has been distributing them to would-be customers who need more food. Such a program is a double-edged sword. On one side, it cuts away the surplus. On the other side, it cuts away want. The school lunch program is one of its most important outlets.

## **Surplus food available in summer.**

The need for summer lunch programs for undernourished children is a compelling challenge to every community.

Ample supplies of surplus foods are available during the summer for community lunch programs. In fact, farmers are often burdened with summer surpluses of fruits and vegetables which are just the food children need. The Government, through the Surplus Marketing Administration, stands ready to supply these foods.



It is up to the local community to take the lead in organizing summer feeding programs for its hungry children. The same community groups which sponsor school-year programs—school boards, parent-teacher associations, mothers' clubs, civic clubs, fraternal organizations, even individuals—can carry on summer lunch programs. Where WPA and NYA help is available, it can be used to cook and serve the meals.

Foods in surplus vary with the seasons. But they usually include fresh and dried fruits, cereals, vegetables, dairy and poultry products. In the summer a variety of fresh garden vegetables and fruits are also available. Of course, some additional foods are necessary for well-prepared meals. Supplementary foods such as sugar, seasonings, cocoa, peanut butter, meat, and milk are provided by the local community.

### **Summer lunch programs.**

More than half of our States and the District of Columbia have already made a start on summer lunch programs. Community centers, playgrounds, parks, and schools are used to serve health-building lunches made in whole or part from surplus foods. In a number of States, community welfare camps for underprivileged children who pay no fee, receive a large variety of surplus foods.

One of the most successful summer feeding programs for undernourished children in 1940 was in a Chicago community. Sponsored jointly by the Back O' The Yards Neighborhood Council and the Catholic Youth Organization, and with WPA help, this project served lunches at a neighborhood community center to some 1,200 children daily in six shifts of 200 boys and girls each. Children from both public and parochial schools participated. All available surplus commodities were used.

During the summer of 1940, cold lunches were served in 61 District of Columbia schools to nearly 5,000 children. Food was prepared by WPA help in the District's central kitchen, just as it was during the school year, and delivered by truck to the various schools. A typical lunch served consisted of a baked bean sandwich, a bread and butter sandwich, raw carrot sticks, stewed prunes and one-half pint of milk. Holyoke, Mass., served a combination of hot and cold lunches to over 800 children during the summer of 1940. The food was prepared at nine kitchens in different sections of the city just as it was during the school months. The children walked from the various playgrounds to the nearest school-lunch center to receive their noonday meal.

A number of smaller communities carried on summer lunch programs in church centers, neighborhood houses, camps, settlement houses, and social centers. School children who came regularly for their one good meal often brought along their

underfed younger brothers and sisters. These preschool youngsters are also eligible to take part in summer feeding programs.

### **Every community can do it.**

Many communities are arranging to keep their school houses open during the summer. Even if the school house is closed, every community has a recreation center, a playground, a town meeting hall, a church basement, or a clubhouse which could be used as a summer lunch program center. If there are no cooking facilities, cold lunches of fresh vegetables, fruits, and milk make highly nutritious summer lunches. Produce donated from community gardens can be used to supplement the surplus foods received. WPA and NYA help are available in many places. Volunteer helpers from parent-teacher associations and other civic clubs can organize summer lunch programs as successfully as they have organized so many school-year programs.

It is clearly a community responsibility to see that surplus foods available for children who need them, get to them all-year round. As Dr. Thomas Parran, Surgeon General of the United States Public Health Service, has said:

“In our educational system we are wasting much money trying to teach children with half-starved bodies and minds. We shall spend tomorrow on the care of their sickness many times over what we save today on food which would prevent it.”

Records show that the school lunch programs have meant gains in weight, less illness, increased mental and physical alertness for children suffering from malnutrition. Good food habits are being formed which will mean a new future market for the protective foods when today's school children become tomorrow's wage earners. But the gains of the school months must not be lost during the months of vacation. Nourishing foods for underfed children are an all-year round necessity. Our national health bill will be less in the future if we feed our children properly now.

COMMUNITIES CAN GET ASSISTANCE IN ORGANIZING SUMMER LUNCH PROGRAMS, AND FIELD INFORMATION ON THE SURPLUS FOODS, BY WRITING TO THEIR STATE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WELFARE AT THEIR STATE WELFARE AGENCY, OR DIRECTLY TO THE SURPLUS MARKETING ADMINISTRATION, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, WASHINGTON, D. C.